

Webster J. K. THE

Vail of the Covering,

Spread over ALL

NATIONS.

What it is; And how Removed.

With a Discovery of that Mountain of
Fat things full of Marrow,

And Wines on the Lees well Refined.

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By JOHN WEBSTER.

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T H E
*V*AIL of the Covering,
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W I T H A
Discovery of that *Mountain of Fat Things,*
full of Marrow, and Wines on the Lees
well Refined.

Delivered on a Publick Day of Thanksgiving,
June 23. 1653.

ISAIAH XXV. 6, 7, &c.

*In this Mountain shall the Lord of Hosts make
unto all People a Feast of fat things, a Feast
of Wines on the Lees, of fat things full of
Marrow, of Wines on the Lees well refined.
And he will destroy in this Mountain the face
of the Covering cast over all People, and the
Vail that is spread over all Nations, &c.*

TH E Prophet in the former Part of
the Chapter, having seen and taken
notice of those wonderful Works
wrought by Jesus Christ, both in his Judg-
ments

ments and Mercies, he breaks out into wonderful Praise, Rejoycing, and Admiration of his wonderful Works, and of his Counsels of Old, *O Lord, thou art my God, I will exalt thee, I will praise thy Name, for thou hast done wonderful Things, thy Counsels of Old are Faithfulness and Truth:* In which he gives thanks, as in the Person of Jesus Christ, or as a Member of him, and expresseth the deep and wonderful things which have been wrought only and alone by Him. From whence we may take notice, that the Songs and Praises of all Saints, are only and alone to magnifie and lift up Jesus Christ: *In his Temple every one speaks of his Glory;* they have nothing to say in praise of Man, of the Power of Man, Wisdom of Man, or the Glory of Man, of the Faithfulness of Man, of the Counsels of Man, but of the Lord alone.

They are not telling forth what they have done to bring Glory to themselves, or to set up their Wisdom, or Power, or Parts, or any thing in them; of their Righteousness, of their Holiness, of their Love, of their Joy, of their Peace, or any thing of this Nature; as the *Scribes and Pharisees, I am not so and so,* and I do thus and thus, thereby to magnifie themselves, or to make others think highly of them; no, but their Songs and their Praise is alone to exalt Jesus Christ, and to tell of his Doings, of his Counsels, of his Faithfulness and Truth, of his Mercies and loving Kindness, of his Righteousness and Judgments: This is their Glory, and this is their Song.

In the Second Verse, you may see how he sets out the Spoils and the Ruins that Jesus Christ hath made, *Great and glorious Cities made Heaps;*

Heaps ; of a defended City a Ruine. That strong Gen. 11.
 City *Babel*, built up by the Power and Wisdom
 of Man, for his Protection and Defence, which
 he would raise up to Heaven, to prevent De-
 struction hereafter, that the Deluge of Wrath
 may not swallow him up: The Soul having
 seen the Almighty Power of Jesus Christ, ruin-
 ing, and bringing down this Tower, and this
BABEL in himself, and making all this
 Work, Power, Wisdom, Providence of Man,
 of Self and Flesh to be made *Babel, Confusion*.
 Here now, the Saints give all the Glory to Je-
 sus Christ alone ; Man finds that he was raising
 a Temple, setting up a Worship of his own de-
 vising ; for what End ? That he may secure
 himself, provide for himself, deliver himself
 from Wrath, from Hell, from the overflowing
 Scourge, from the devouring Flood ; he Isa. 28. 15.
 thought himself to be wonderful in working,
 and glorying in his own Devices, in his own
 Religion, in his own Forms, and thereby
 thought this Tower would secure him, no De-
 luge could reach him, he was above all Dan-
 ger ; as *Paul*, he was marching on confidently
 and boldly in his own Uprightness, and thought Acts 9. &
 he acted all things *according to the Rule*. Now ch. 26. 9.
 in the height of all his Pride and Confidence, Je-
 sus Christ brings him down, smites him from
 his Horse ; he had built a City (as it were) Psa. 49. 11
 and called it by his own Name, magnified his own
 Strictness, his own Holiness, and said as Ne- Dan. 4. 35.
buchadnezzar, *Is not this great Babel that I have*
builded ? Now the Soul seeing all this to be
 a Lye, to be Confusion, and a Deceit, and a
 Delusion, and all turned by Jesus Christ into Mat. 24. 2
 Ruin and Confusion in his own Soul, and not

- a Stone left upon a Stone which is not thrown down*
 This the Soul comes to see is alone the Work
 of Christ; that he hath made, *of a glorious City*
an Heap; of a defenced City a ruinous Place
of Strangers: and this to be no City, and shall
 never be built again. When once Jesus Christ
 pulls down *Babel* in us, it shall never be built
 again: He hath laid it all flat to the Ground.
 All of Man's setting up must be utterly ruined;
 no Part of that Building set up upon the Ruins
 of Man's Power, Wisdom, Strength, Parts,
 will Christ make any use of for his Kingdom,
 but all must be ruined, laid flat to the Ground,
 and he will not leave *a Stone upon a Stone*. The
 Work of Christ is an overthrowing, overturn-
 ing, overturning Work; the Work of Christ
 is to flay strip and undo Men; to strip them
 of all Conceit of themselves, to lay them flat to
 the Earth, to equal and level them with the
 worst of Men. The Work of the Devil is to
 build up Man in his own Wisdom, in his own
 Strength, to make him something; to cry *Peace*
Peace to him, *when there is no Peace*; to put
 Wrath far away, and to tell him he is thus
 and thus, he hath such Love and Charity, and
 Meekness, and Conformity to the Will of
 Christ, and therefore fear not, *none of all those*
things shall happen to thee. When indeed this
 is nothing but the Work and Wisdom of the
 Devil in Man: to make him secure, and *put the*
Evil Day far from him, and thereby hath made
a Covenant with Death and Hell; and of all Men
 he shall be preserved from Ruin: Why? he is
 a Holy Man, he hath submitted to Ordinances,
 he is under the purest Forms, most agreeable
 to the Will and Mind of Christ. Whenas all
 this

this may be nothing but the Work of the Devil in Man, meerly to delude him, and to keep away Guilt, that he may not see the bottomless Gulf of Sin, and Delusion that is in his own Heart.

But when once Jesus Christ hath thus declared his Power in this Soul, and brought forth his Eternal Counsels in it, then he comes to see that all this is done in Faithfulness, and loving Kindness, and in tender Compassion; *Hof. 12.1.* then he comes to see that he was deluded, and *Ila. 25.4.* fed himself with Lyes, with Wind and Vanity, and that the way to safety was not to build up this *Babel*, but to bring it into Confusion: For, saith he, in the Fourth Verse, *Thou hast been a strength to the poor and needy in their distress, a Refuge from the Storms, a Shadow from the Heat.* So that you see the Matter of Saints Praises is only to magnifie and set up, and exalt and make Christ great and wonderful. They cannot say any thing of themselves, or of Men; for they see them to be nothing but Sin, and the Fountain of Misery, Desolation and Destruction, even the very best, the highest, the holiest in their own Esteem. And so he goes on, *Thou shalt bring down the Noise of the Strangers, &c. the branch and the terrible ones shall be brought low.* *Ver. 5.* And all this is but to shew forth what further Work Christ makes, how he goes on making more Havock in Satan's Building; Man's Work, or the Work of Satan in him, is to set up and exalt the Wisdom of Man, and Power and Holiness of Man, and to slight and debase the Wisdom, Holiness, and Power of God, all this is Foolishness; but his own is Wisdom indeed, and Holiness indeed: Now

- the work of Christ is to pull down *these strong*
 2 Cor. 10. *h lds and high imaginations*: Babel must be con-
 4. founded, and Bethel must be erected: Christ will
 himself set up his own Temple, his own House,
 his own Kindom, and will bring Man to see that
 he is nothing but Want and Misery, Emptiness
 and Confusion, Sin and Death, Hell and Con-
 demnation: And that Jesus Christ alone is
 Fulness, Riches, Life, Light, Glory, and all
 that can be named or esteemed Good, and
 Man is nothing but what may be named and
 esteemed Evil: And this is certainly the work
 that Christ makes in every Soul where-ever He
 enters: And Christ brings the Soul really to
 see, all this true in it self, all done and acted
 in Man: That this *Babel*, and this Antichrist
 is set up in him; and also, that the Power and
 Wisdom of Jesus Christ hath ruined and de-
 stroyed them in him; and that this can be no
 other, but the work of Christ, Conquering,
 Jude v. 5. and bringing *all things, even every thought, into*
subjection in him, and he gives him the sole
 Praise and Glory of these mighty works in
 him: Why? For he knows he had no hand in
 it himself: He could not Believe of himself,
 Repent of himself: Never would the Strong
 Luke 11. *Man bind himself, Ruin himself; but when a*
 22. *stronger then he comes, then he is disarm'd, and*
 never before: And thus he sees himself deli-
 vered from Bondage, set free from the Devils
 Chains, brought out of Babylon; and that
 Christ alone is all in all, he is all Fulness and no
 Emptiness, all Riches and no want, all Wis-
 dom and no Folly, all Righteousness and no
 Impurity at all: But contrary, himself to be
 nothing but Emptiness and Nothingness, Dark-
 ness,

ness, Misery, Folly, Madnes; *folly and mad-* Eccl. 9. 3.
ness is in his Heart while he lives, and afterward
goes down into the Pit; While Men thus build
 up themselves, and have these high opinions
 of themselves, they are in the Pit, in Darkness,
 in Misery, in Bondage; but they see it not,
 till at length they fall down and sink into it.
 for Ever.

But where Christ appears in Mercy, there he
 brings down the noise of Strangers, all this in
 Man, and of Man, is but the noise of Strangers,
 tho' Man have a high opinion of himself, and glo-
 ries in these Conceits, and thinks himself in the
 King's favour, and if any shall be Saved he shall,
 and so blesteth himself and all is well, and no
 Wrath, nor no Devil, nor no Hell, shall come
 near him; yet, alas, this is but the noise and
 the voice of Strangers, which must be brought
 down, Christ cannot own this Voice (for 'tis
the Voice of Strangers) but will bring it down
 to Hell, and to the sides of the Pit, for all this Isa. 14. 15.
 Language is nothing else but the Language of
 Death, and the Language of Babel, the Lan-
 guage of the Devil, and the Language of Con-
 fusion: All this is but *the branches of the Terrible* Ibid. 25. 5.
ones; the branch which hath enlarged and
 spread it self over the whole Earth; *Every one* Psal. 14. 3.
is gone astray, and there is none that doth good, no
not one. And all the *Imagination of Man's Heart* Gen. 6. 5.
is Evil, and only Evil continually: Not a Man
 upon the face of the whole Earth, but this
 branch hath spread it self over him, and he sits
 under the shadow of it; he hath something of Isa. 30. 3.
 Man to shroud and cover himself withal, *This*
is the branch of the Terrible one, that Jesus Christ
 will cut down. Man's Holiness bears great
 sway,

Isai. 24.
20.

sway, and who dare speak against it? It's high and lifted up, and reacheth to Heaven, yet the Power and Faithfulness of Christ shall bring it low, it shall fall and never rise again, *and the Transgression thereof shall be heavy upon it.* And Cursed be he that Buildeth again the Walls of Jerico.

Note.

And then he comes to the Verses read, what shall come to pass after the accomplishment of all these things, *In this Mountain shall the Lord of Hosts make unto all People a Feast of fat things, &c.* He spake not of any Mountain before, but of a Branch, and he presently changeth the metaphor, and speaks of a Mountain. It shews us thus much (by the way) that there is not any one thing in the World, but it holds forth Jesus Christ: All the whole Creation is a representation of Jesus Christ: All Types, all Metaphors are resemblances of him.

In this Mountain: Mountains are things of the greatest Strength, most Stable, most Immoveable, most Durable: And he is in Scripture often call'd, *The Mountain of Strength, The Mountain of Holiness, The strength of Salvation,* and the *Mountain of his Glory.* No Man ever comes into the Mountain of Strength, nor into the Mountain of Glory, nor of Holiness, nor of Salvation, till they come to Jesus Christ: Strength and Glory, and Riches and Power, and Righteousness and Peace is only to be had in him, and no where else, only *In this Mountain* will the Lord of Hosts make a Feast of fat things full of Marrow, and Wine on the Lees well refined: in him only can we drink out of the Wells of Salvation, and eat of the hidden Manna: So that these words contain a further making out

Jer. 31. 23.

Isa. 33. 6.

Ibid. 12. 3.

Rev. 2. 17.

of the Excellency and Glory of Jesus Christ, unto miserable and undone Man: If once Man come to be thus lost, undone, and brought down in himself, then will Jesus Christ make him a Feast of fat things; if once his Peace be lost, his Righteousness lost, his Joy lost, his Help lost, his Strength lost, then will Jesus Christ be all these unto him, he will make out a Peace for him, a Righteousness for him, a Glory for him; he will be to him, *a Feast of fat things full of Marrow, and Wine on the Lees well refined.*

And so, as he saith in the next verse, *I will destroy in this Mountain, the face of the Covering cast over all People, and the Vail that is spread over all Nations.* That is, Man's opinion of his own Goodness, his seeming Righteousness, which was as a Covering, as a Vail, that Man could not see himself Miserable and under Wrath, and Hell and Darkness: This is the covering; every Man naturally hath an opinion of his own Goodness, he hath something or other to cover himself withal; but some have finer, and (as they conceive) richer coverings than others, they think they have more Holiness, and more Repentance, and more Love, and more good Works: and these are by so much the worse, these are at a farther distance from the Kingdom of Heaven: And *Publicans* Mat. 21. *and Harlots, and the vilest Sinners, shall go into* 31. *the Kingdom of Heaven, and they themselves* (that have so much Holiness) *shall be shut out*: Here now *The vail of the Temple must be rent, from the* Luke 23. *top to the bottom, the Rock of their Righteous-* 45. *ness must be rent, their shame must be laid open, what they have done in the secret chambers* Ibid. 12. 3. of

of their own Hearts, *must now be proclaimed upon the house top*, they cannot conceal it, the covering is removed: Now they come to see that Jesus Christ is only *the Rock of their Righteousness*, and that they have none at all; all other Rocks, all other Righteousnesses must be Rent, that so their Want, their Misery, their Condemnation, their Hell, their Horror, their Darkness and Delusion, may be discovered: And if Men be once brought to this, to be content to be Miserable (as indeed all Mankind is by reason of the Fall) to be content to see themselves Undone, to be shut up under the Wrath of God, Condemnation sealed upon them, and the Pit to have shut her mouth upon them; having once thus lost all their Power, Wisdom, Righteousness, then all Death, Hell and Darkness shall be swallowed up in the Death of Christ: Then he will, as it is in the eighth verse, *Swallow up Death in Victory, and the Lord God shall wipe away all Tears from all Faces*: In this Mountain he will take away all Sorrow, *and the rebuke of their Sins*, all Guilt, all Condemnation, all Bonds, all Captivity, all strong Holds, all Chains, all Death, all Fears, Griefs, Terrors, and all things of that Nature: This Rock, this Mountain will swallow up all, and so *take away the rebuke of his People*.

I sai. 25. 8.

When a Man is brought into this Mountain, he shall be thus fed with *fat things and wine on the lees*, and all Tears washed away, nothing left of that nature, and this is that day of the Lord, this is the Lord's resting day, and this is the Souls Sabbath and resting day, when all Rebukes, all Frowns, all Griefs are remo-

removed: All other Sabbaths and Rests external, are but Figures and representations of this true Rest. And then it follows in the ninth verse, *And it shall be said in that day, Isa. 25. 9. Lo, this is our God, we have waited for him, this is the Lord, we have waited for him, he will save us, and we will be glad and rejoyce in his Salvation, for in this mountain shall the band of the Lord rest, &c.* When Christ hath thus appeared to the destruction of all things in Man, and hath brought him out of himself, and hath ruined all his Strength, Righteousness, Wisdom, &c. Then Christ will be all in all to him, then will he feast him in this Mountain; and the Soul seeing all these things accomplished in it self, then it cannot chuse but Rejoyce, Triumph and Sing; even the Song of Moses and the Lamb, *This is our God that we have waited for: This is the Lord, in him alone is Power, and Wisdom, and Righteousness, loving Kindnesses and tender Mercies, Thou O Rev. 4. 11. Lord only art worthy to receive honour, and glory, and power, thou alone art our Strength, and our Salvation; all their happiness is concentrated in this One God, and they have no God but him, no Saviour but him; they have but One God, and one Faith, and one Baptism, One Eph. 4. 4, Body, one Spirit, one Hope; One Lord, one God 5, 6. and father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in all.* They rejoyce in this, that they see themselves made nothing, that they are emptied of themselves, of their Power, Wisdom, Righteousness: They now Rejoyce, Triumph and Sing, because the vail of the covering of all Nations is removed, in their Hearts: That their high Thoughts are brought down, that their
Wif-

Wisdom is made Folly, that their opinion of their own Glory, of their own Somethingsness, of their own Holiness is removed, and Christ alone is He in whom they enjoy all thiags.

From hence ye may conclude upon this Point.

Doct.

That Christ alone is the Saints strong mountain, and their feast of all good things. He is only their mountain of Strength, he is their Joy and their Song, he hath rent and destroyed the face of the Covering which is upon all People; they see that none can remove this Covering, but Christ alone: And therefore he having done this in them and for them, this rejoyceth *Psal. 4. 7.* their Hearts far more than if he had increased their Corn, or their Wine, or their Oyl: Here is their Feast, here is their day of Thanksgiving, here is their Sabbath, which shall never end; here is their *marrow and fatness*, he is their Wine, and their *fat things full of marrow*: He is their Mountain, their Glory, their Rock, and all this they see is wrought in them by the Power only of Jesus Christ. And this adds to their rejoycing, that they see they had no hand in it, they see that they did not chuse him, but he chose them; that they instead of chusing him, ran away from him, opposed him, fought against him; and yet he followed them, and never left them 'till he had Conquered them: And this now is their Joy, and their Praise, and their Song; and nothing in Heaven or Earth shall be Exalted or Magnified by them, but only Jesus Christ, their strong Mountain, their Feast of all good things.

These Souls only come to see, that there is a Vail, and that this is *the vail of the Covering spread over*

over all Nations ; all those, upon whom the
 Vail is, see not the Vail, but he only in whom
 'tis rent, from whom it's removed : And all
 their desire is, that it may be removed from
 all People, that others may see that which he
 sees, and enjoy that which he enjoys, that
 Christ may be a Mountain to them as he is to
 him, a Rock to them as he is to him, a Feast
 to them as he is to him. And they can say
 truly, and name this Mountain *Jehovahjireth* ;
only in the mount of the Lord, can this be seen :
Abraham could not Sacrifice his Son 'till he
 came up into this Mount : Once come into this
 Mountain, then the Soul can part with all
 things for the love of Christ, nothing is so
 dear as Christ. And this is the conclusion
 wrought by the Spirit in *Abraham* : *Jehovah-*
jireth, saith he, *in the mount of the Lord it shall*
be seen : there is no seeing any of these things,
 nor there is no true Feasting 'till we come into
 this Mount of the Lord. What was that go-
 ing up of *Abraham* to the mount *Moriah* think
 you ? In the truth of it, it was no other thing
 but this, his going up from himself, and out
 of himself, forsaking all things for this one
 thing, and coming up to this Mountain of the
 Lord, where the Lord alone was all in all : Be-
 loved, know this for Truth, there is no Wis-
 dom, no Righteousness, no Strength, &c.
 no-where else, but here, *In the mount of the*
Lord it shall be seen, and no-where else : There
 is no Self-denial, no true Repentance, no con-
 quering of the least Sin, no true Peace, no Joy,
 no Love, no Wisdom but only in this Mount ;
 whatever Men pretend, that they are Wise,
 or Holy, and the like, 'tis all but Deceit and a
 Delu-

Mat. 5.
29.

Delusion, 'till we come up to the Mount, 'till this Vail be removed: We can never *bind the strong Man*, we can never *cut off our right Hands*, or *pull out our right Eyes* 'till then; we can never forsake our selves, we can never deny our own Power, Wisdom and Holiness.

Rom. 4.
17, 20.

Here now is this Mountain of Strength, here it was that *Abraham staggered not through Unbelief, but was strong in Faith giving Glory to God*. Here he knew and was fully perswaded that he that had promised was able to perform; that though *Isaac* were Sacrificed, yet God was he who could quicken the Dead, and calleth things which are not as though they were. Herein was *Abraham the father of the Faithful*, and *Isaac the seed of many Nations*, and all the Faithful are his seed in this: And his going up to the Mountain, is no other but what is done by all the Faithful; that litteral Mountain, was not the Truth, but only the figure of this strong Mountain Jesus Christ. He is that

Isai. 2. 2.

Mountain spoken of *Isai. 2. 2.* called there *the Mountain of the Lord's House*, which shall be established *on the top of the Mountains*, and shall be exalted *above the Hills*, and all Nations shall flow unto it. Jesus Christ is that Mountain, who is unalterable, unmovable, unchangeable, never to be shaken, nor never to be removed; and to be established on the top of all Mountains, above all the Mountains of Man: The Mountains of Man's Wisdom, of Man's Righteousness, which were esteemed (by Men) never so High, never so Strong, yet this Mountain shall overtop them all, and be established above all. Beloved, none come to know these things, but those in whom they are wrought,

wrought, in whom *the Vail of the Covering is removed*; Men may pretend to these things and be very confident they enjoy them, when indeed they are under the Covering to this very Day.

This is that stone also that *Daniel* speaks of, *Dan. 2.* which was cut out of the Mountain without hands, which smote the Image, which was so terrible in the form thereof, his Head being of fine Gold, his Breast and Arms of Silver, his Belly and Thighs of Brass, his Legs of Iron, and his Feet part Iron and part Clay. Now the stone cut out without Hands, smote this terrible Image, and it self became a great *ver. 25.* Mountain, and filled the whole Earth: However this may be applicable (as by some it is) to the outward Monarchies in the World, one succeeding and overcoming another: Yet, all those things are but Figures of the Truth: For those things are not done without Hands: But the Truth is done in Spirit: Whatever it is that Men set up to shelter themselves under, any Form, any Religion to defend themselves from the Wrath of God, from the Guilt of Sin, from seeing themselves Odious, with all their Righteousness and Rags. All things of that nature are Images, and are such Images, and so Terrible, that no Man is able to break them to Pieces; 'tis only *The Stone cut out of the Mountain without hands*, can bring them down, or break them to pieces. These Images are divers, and of several Tempers and Conditions; some are of Clay; that is, some are of low rudiments, poor and mean things that Men set up and rely upon, and shelter themselves withal, their good meanings, and good

hopes, and the like; and these may be esteemed
 but as the Feet of this Image: Others go
 higher, and they depend upon things of more
 worth and strength, that seem to be made of
 Iron, they cloath themselves with moral Virtues,
 and put confidence in them: And these they think
 will defend and save them: But there are some
 that go higher than all these, and they pretend to
 cloath themselves with the Garments of Jesus
 Christ himself, and the Graces of the Spirit; and
 in these they Glory: And this glisters like Gold,
 but it is not Gold; and they seem to have Faith,
 but have not Faith; and Love, but 'tis not Love;
 and Patience, but 'tis not Patience, &c. And they
 are no other but Images and Idols, upon which
 many Men (professing Religion, and under
 the strictest Forms and Fellowships) rely, and
 shelter themselves under, and think these will
 defend and protect them from Hell and De-
 struction, and God's Wrath: These things co-
 ver them, and cover the Wickedness of their
 Hearts, that they cannot see themselves how
 vile they are, how infinitely wicked in the
 sight of God; these *cover themselves with a co-*
vering, but not with the Lord's Spirit: Wo be to
 all such; for these poor Souls do most piti-
 fully and miserably delude themselves: These,
 instead of putting on the rich and glorious
 Robe of Christ's Righteousness, do cloath
 themselves with the stinking, loathsome, abo-
 minable and devilish Righteousness of Man:
 Ay, and they prefer it before the excellency
 of the Lord Jesus Christ: And of these Christ
 himself saith, *Verily, such can never enter into*
the Kingdom of Heaven, but Publicans and Har-
lots, and the vilest of Sinners shall enter into the
Kingdom,

Isa. 30. 1.

Mat. 21.
31.

Kingdom, when they shall be shut out. For these
 are those that have put the stumbling block of
 their Iniquity before their face, as the Lord said
 by Ezekiel; and have set up their Idols in their Ezek. 7.
 heart, and yet come to enquire after the Lord; and 19. and
 these Men of all other will the Lord cut off; 14. 4. &c.
 these Men the Lord will answer them by himself,
 and will set his Face against them, and will make
 a Sign and a Proverb above all other, and will
 cut them off from the midst of his People Israel: I
 will answer them according to the multitude of their
 Idols, says God, and will not be enquired of at all
 by them, for these are the *Rebellious House*: These
 commit the highest Abominations: These set
 up their Posts by the Lord's Posts, and their
 Thresholds by his Threshold; which is the highest
 Iniquity: These have daubed up a Wall with
 untempered Morter; they are the Wall; and
 the Prophets that prophesie Peace to them,
 they are the daubers, and the sowers of Pillows
 under all Arm-holes, that pollute the Lord among
 his People for handfuls of Barty, and for pieces of
 Bread; that Slay the Souls that should not Die, and
 save the Souls Alive that should not Live, by their
 Lying to his People that hear and receive their
 Lies; having made the Righteous sad, and strength- Ibid. 8. 12.
 ned the hands of the Wicked that he should not re- and 18.
 turn from his wicked way, by promising and shewing Isai. 29.
 him the true way to Life. These are those of 15.
 the House of Israel that have set up the Idols of
 Jealousie in the Chambers of their Imagery, and
 dig deep, and think to hide their Counsels from
 the Lord, and these are their Idols and their
 Gods they Worship, Serve, Rely upon, and
 Sacrifice to: Therefore with these will the
 Lord deal in fury, because these wipe their

months, and put the branch to their nose, and please themselves in their own Idols, and with the Gods that their own hands have made.

Now Men being thus confident in their own Righteousness, and thinking this Form, and that Duty, and their strict walking, shall Deliver and Protect them, and they resting secure under this mighty Image, then comes the *Stone cut out of the Mountain*, and breaks in pieces this glorious Image: It falls upon all their Duties, upon all their Righteousness, upon all their Towers, upon all their Idols, and crushes them all to Pieces, breaks in pieces that stately Image made of Iron and Clay, and Brass, and Silver, and Gold, and makes all their high opinions of themselves become like the Chaff upon the summers threshing Floor that the wind carrieth away. And then they are brought to see, that all their Confidence was but an Idol, an Image, a Lie, Vanity, Wind, Delusion. And then, and never before, this little Stone becomes (in them) a great Mountain, and this fills the whole Earth: Man being once discovered to be, as he is, Vanity, a Lie, Babel, Confusion, Darknes, Hell, Horreur, Misery, and what not, with all his glorious Righteousnesses, discovering them to be but Rags, and filthy Rags; when Man is brought really and not in words only (for that is part of the Covering) to be nothing but Sin, Emptiness, Nothingness; then is the work begun, the Foundation laid: *Thou art Peter, upon this rock will I build my Church*; and the Foundation being thus laid, the gates of Hell shall never prevail against it: The other building was but upon the Sand, and cannot withstand when the Rain falls and the Winds and

Dan. 2.
45.

Ib. 2. 35.

Isai. 64. 6.

Mat. 16.
18.

and Storms blow, but the fall thereof will be great; but when this work is brought about in the Soul, that Man is laid low, made nothing, emptied of himself: This is a foundation upon which building, let the Rain fall, and the Winds blow, and the Storms beat, yet it shall stand, ^{Mat. 7. 25.} because it is founded upon a Rock. This Rock is only and alone Jesus Christ, that blessed eternal Rock of Ages; upon whom all the Saints, from the Foundation of the World to its Consummation, are founded and bottomed, as upon Mount Sion, which shall never be removed: All the Patriarchs and Prophets give Testimony to this Rock; to him that is the Rock of Ages, and is that great Mountain that shall fill the whole Earth: He that shall only Reign, and shall be all in all, whose Kingdom alone shall be exalted: All the Fathers drank of this Rock; as the Apostle saith, 1 Cor. 10. 4. they were 1 Cor. 10. baptized unto Moses, but they all eat the same spiritual meat, and all did drink of the same spiritual drink; for they drank of that spiritual rock that followed them, and that rock was Christ.

He is that unspeakable Glory, Power, Majesty, Eternity, &c. that can never be lifted up enough, never able to be unfolded nor set forth by Men and Angels according to his Greatness, his Goodness, his Unchangeableness, his Glory, his Wisdom and Infiniteness: He is the wonder of Ages, the brightness of his Fathers Glory, ^{Heb. 1. 3.} and the express Image of his Person: He it is that is set forth by all Creatures, by all Types, Metaphors, Representations, and yet all come infinitely short of him. He that once comes into this Mountain we have been speaking of, he shall be fed with these fat things: There is

no attaining these high and fat things but in the Lord's Mountain; 'tis not Man's Mountain, nor Man's fat things can feast us with these things: but this Man shall be fed and shall have the *Vail rent from the top to the bottom*. The Covering, that is, the Covering of the Vail of all Nations, that is more or less upon every Man: But it is he only in whom Man's glorious Temple is destroyed, and all of Man's building laid flat, and *not a Stone left upon a Stone, that is not thrown down.*

Mat. 24.
2.

That we may come and make some use of all we have said, and apply it to our selves.

Use I.

This discovers, that all things that Christ will make use of in his Church, must be materials of his own, from himself, of his own providing; whatever it be that Man provides, that Men hew out by their own Wisdom, or Power, and frame never such curious Images, they are all Abominable, all must be Destroy'd, broke to Pieces, blown away, made nothing: All fat things are only to be had in this Mountain: There is no destroying the *Vail of the Covering of all Nations*, no bringing Man to see his own Misery, his own Hell, his own Darkness, but here; no shewing Man the excellency of the Riches and Glory of Christ, but here; no true Feast, but here; all other Feasts are but Death and Poyson. Whatever Feast Man provides, or feeds, or feasts himself withal, or takes content in, he feeds himself with lies, he is but as an hungry Man still, that dreams he eats, and when he awakes he is empty: But this Feast of *fat things*, and *Wine on the lees*, and *fat things full of Marrow*, and *Wine on the lees well refined*, is only prepared and

Isai. 29. 8.

and given unto us by Jesus Christ; Man naturally feeds upon nothing but Sin and Misery, and Hell and Damnation; and these are sweet to him: Why? Because there is a Vail upon them, the *Covering of all Nations*; some things, more or less excellent, some Goodness, some Righteousness, some Holiness, some Duties, some Reformation, some Forms, some Shadows; and these are the Covering, by reason of which he neither sees nor tastes Death, nor Hell nor Destruction. In Christ there is all Life, all Rest, all Peace, *all discovery of good things*; but if Man remain in himself, and dwell in his own Mountain, there is all Darkness, and all Deformity, nothing but Death, Trouble, Briars, Thorns; but it never appears so, 'till the Vail be taken away; 'till then, Man is never stript of himself, never turned outward, but all is under this Covering; and while so, he Blesses himself, and saith, I am safe, all is well, there is no Death nor Hell can come near me, I am a Reform'd Man, I walk exactly, I press after the strictest Rules of the Word, I am under the purest Ordinances. Here now, Man *Eats* Death, and tastes of the *forbidden tree*, and the Tree is *sweet to him*, Gen. 3. 6. *and to be desired.*

But now when Christ comes into the Soul really, all these Thoughts are Cursed, Damned, thrown to Hell, and the Man becomes Vile, Abominable in his own Sight: Instead of seeing himself an Heir of Glory, as before, his thoughts are clean altered; the *Vail*, the *Covering is removed*, and he now sees himself an Heir of Hell, a poor deluded undone Creature: He sees **THE ASSE**, the Flesh, must not

go up into the Mountain with *Abraham*, but must be left below; let that bear the burden, as fit and meet it should, let it bear the Wrath of God, it must be Destroyed, it must be Condemned, it must go to Hell: All the glory of Man, all the excellency of Nature, all the holiness of Man, the wisdom of Man, all must be left below with the Afs, the Flesh, at the bottom of the hill, and there must be a going out of our selves, a losing of our selves, that we may go up to the Mountain, and there be feasted, and there see Visions, there see Strength, there see Glory, there see Power, there see Riches, Righteousness, and all good things; then Man shall see how he called *Evil*,

Ifai. 5. 20. Good, and Good, Evil; Darknes, Light and Light, Darknes; there he shall be feasted with all

Pro. 9. 2. delights, there he shall see how Wisdom hath furnished her Table, there the scales are removed; here he beholds Jacob's Ladder, here is the Valley of Achor, here he enjoys his Hopes, here he sees Visions, and the third Heavens opened, and here he feeds upon the hidden

Rev. 2. Manna, &c.

But know this, that all these things are not done at once, but by degrees; as Man leaves the Afs behind, so he ascends the Mountain: As Man goes out of himself, so he enjoys Jesus Christ, and is made one with him; as Man is made nothing, so Christ comes to be made all; Man becomes all in Christ, and nothing in himself: So far as Man utterly denies himself, so far he eats of these fat things; when he sees himself oppressed with Sin, or Wrath, or Hell, he presently runs to this Mountain; when he is parched with drought, he runs to
this

this Rock, to this *fountain of living waters*; be- Jer. 17.
 low in the Valley, in himself, he can find no ¹³.
 comfort, nothing but Wrath, and Death,
 and Darkness, and Destruction, there is no-
 thing but the bottomless Pit, there's nothing
 but Madness and Folly, nothing but Lies and
 Vanity; there's nothing but Fears and Frights,
 Horrors and Amazements, and *the smook of the* Rev. 9. 2.
bottomless Pit: He now cries out, *Wo is me!* did
 I so much delude my self, to think my self to be
 Wise, Holy, &c. whenas there was nothing
 but Folly, and an infiniteness of Madness! And
 now he sees that there is in him Antichrist
 indeed, the beast with seven Heads and ten
 Horns, and himself bearing the Mark and I-
 mage of the Beast.

And all this the Soul sees by Faith, for
 Faith is the Souls Eye: When Faith goes up
 from its self, and looks upon Jesus Christ,
 there it sees all Riches, all Glory, all Wis-
 dom, all Unchangeableness, all Purity, all Life,
 all Rest, all in all; in a word, it sees him to
 be Unutterable, Unspeakable, and in him
 things not able to be uttered, not fit to be
 uttered, but only to such as are admitted into
 the same condition, for others cannot com-
 prehend these words, they are Paradoxes and
 Riddles: They see themselves to be nothing
 but Sin and Horror, and there is the bottom,
 or the foot of *Jacob's Ladder*; and they see
 also Jesus Christ with all his Riches, Glory,
 Power, Wisdom, Righteousness, there is the
 top of the Ladder: These things are only to
 be seen in this Mountain.

When Saints by Faith look down into what
 they are in themselves, they see there is a
 bottom-

Exod. 10.
21.

bottomless pit of Smoak and Darknes, Blackness of Darknes, *Darkness that may be felt*, and they see the Smoak covers the face of the whole Earth: there he sees, in this Valiey, such a bottomless depth of Sin and Misery, that he is ashamed of himself, and ashamed that others should see him to be so.

Now while the Vail is untaken away, all the endeavour, all the wit, all the power of the natural Man, is, to keep on this Covering, to keep it from being rent: he would by no means have it removed, he would upon no terms see himself as he is; to see himself undone, to be nothing but Emptiness and Misery, this kindles the fire of Hell in him: What! He that thought himself so Holy, so full of Goodness; now to see himself to be so far deluded as to be all Sin, and all Darknes, and all Hell: He that thought himself to be a lover of God, and a lover of Righteousness, to be no other but a hater of God, and a hater of true Holiness, and a hater of the Truth! Oh now, by all means, he would cover and hide this monstrous Image from himself, and others: he would not for all the World see himself, nor have others see him thus Vile and thus Miserable; but the contrary, to admire himself, to magnifie himself, as Good Excellent and Holy; but when Jesus Christ comes, he will in despite of all Man's Wisdom and Cunning, and Power, discover him to himself; he shall, whether he will or no, behold his own Shape, see himself in his own Colours: Then he cries out, *Oh miserable Man that I am, who shall deliver me? Lord help me I am undone, I am a Man of polluted Lips; and* wit

Rom. 7.
24.

with *Peter*, *Lord help, or I perish*, I shall sink for ever into this bottomless Gulf, from whence there is no Redemption.

He sees now the Vail rent, and himself lost for ever: And that such is the bottomlesness of this Gulf that he is in, that nothing can redeem him thence, but only the blood of Christ; no hand can help him, but only the infinite bottomless Mercy of the Son of God. He sees now nothing in Heaven or Earth, no Righteousness of Men or Angels could suffice for his Ransom, but Jesus Christ alone; the Son of God himself, must lay down his Life to redeem him out of the nethermost Hell: Now Christ revealing this to him, he hereby ascends up into this Mountain, and there he Feasts, and there he hath all his Wisdom, all his Power, all his Life, all his Meat, *all his* Jer. 17. *living Waters*: Here, he now hath all his ^{13.} Teachings; he now sees Christ's Mountain exalted upon the top of all Mountains, above the top of all Man's Mountains of Wisdom, Power, Holiness, &c. Though they have been raised in Man's esteem never so high, and esteemed as *the Mountains of the Lord*; he sees his Knowledge now meer Folly; his Wisdom, Dark-ness; his Righteousness, Sin; his Power, Weakness; his Glory, Shame; his Heaven, Hell: This he sees in himself, and he can see nothing else but this Misery and this Blindness upon the face of the whole Earth; every Man is under this Darkness, is under this Covering, *the face of the Covering of all Nations.*

Christ went up to the *Mountain* and taught Mat. 5. 2 *the People*. The truth is, this is that Mountain where

where Christ alone Teacheth: All other Teachings are Folly and Ignorance 'till we hear the word at his Mouth: Here in this Mountain the Soul beholds Visions, and receives the manifestations of Christ, and the mysteries of the Kingdom; here it sees from the bottom to the top of *Jacob's Ladder*:

Mat. 24.

15.

Here he sees *the Abomination of Desolation* spoken of by *Daniel the Prophet*, that had it not been for the Love of Christ, the meer Power and Hand of Christ, he had been gone for ever, lost for ever, swallowed up in a mystery of Iniquity; but when Christ brings him into this Mount, then he sees himself escaped, then he sees *Sodom and Gomorrah* all on a Flame, all Self and Flesh, and all Man's Wisdom and Righteousness burnt up, and the smoak thereof ascend as the smoak of a Furnace: And then he can say experimentally, *Jehovajireth*; *In the Mount of the Lord it shall be seen.*

Gen. 22.

14.

Saints can testify of these things, because they have seen and felt them done in themselves, and 'tis that *which their hands have handled of the word of Life*: They can give Testimony to the Wisdom of Christ, to the Power of Christ, to the Righteousness of Christ, to the Everlasting and Unexpressible Goodness of Christ, as it is expressed and put forth in their Hearts; they can give no Testimony of Man, of any Goodness, Wisdom, Power, &c. in themselves, but they know Christ to be all in all: He sees Man, and himself, and all things of Man to be nothing but a pit of Darkness, a lump of Sin, a gulph of Misery, without the least Wisdom, Goodness or Power; but whatever is Good or Strong, or Holy in him, 'tis

'tis not himself, 'tis not of Man, but of and
 from Christ alone: He sees experimentally,
 that he hath (as of himself) no Power, no
 Strength to resist Sin, no Repentance, no
 mind to hate or resist the least Sin, but the
 contrary: He finds a Cursed, Hellish, Dam-
 ned, Unbelieving Heart, *full of Evil, and that* Gen. 6. 5.
continually; a Heart, instead of loving God, it
 fights against God; instead of doing good to
 his Neighbour really, he seek not his good,
 but his own ends in all he doth; that he doth
 nothing at all for God, but himself is his su-
 pream and ultimate end: So that his highest
 and best Actions are Loathsom, Defiled, A-
 bominable. Now the Soul seeing these things
 to be really thus, then all his Strong, High,
 and Towering Conceits fall down before the
 Light, Wisdom, Power and Excellency of
 Christ: And he sees that there is none of all
 these through all the whole Earth, but in Christ
 alone; no Wisdom at all but his, no Power at
 all but his, no Righteousness at all but his,
 and no Creature to receive any Glory but him
 alone: Then he falls down, and cries out, O Rom. 7.
wretched Man that I am, who shall deliver me 24.
from that Body of Death? Who shall deliver
 me from this bottomless Gulph? Who shall
 deliver me from this monstrous Fiend, my own
 self? He now sees the *Locusts of the bottom-* Ibid. 9. 3.
less Pit, covering the face of the whole Earth:
 Every one running after his own Ways, and
 following his own Laws; every Man setting
 up new Gods; every Man setting up the Image
 of his Imagery, and the Abomination of De-
 solation in himself; every Man making himself
 his own God, and seeking to be something,
 and

Gen. 11.
4.

and making the Eternal Glorious God to be an Idol and nothing: He sees himself, with the whole Earth besides, saying, with the builders of *Babel*, *Go to, let us build us a Tower and a City, whose top may reach up to Heaven, that we may not be scattered and destroyed; they will save and deliver themselves from Hell, Wrath and Destruction, by their own Power, by their own Wisdom, by their own Inventions, by the Brick, Slime, and Morter that they have made: Now the Lord looking down from Heaven, to see what the Children of Men are doing, and he in himself sees how God hath said, Let us go down and confound their Language: God in them hath discovered the Evilness of their Ways, the Evil of Self-seeking, Self-glory, of their Self-wisdom, Self-power, Self-righteousness; and they in whom, or to whom the Lord discovers these things, all this contrivance, and all this work in them is made B A B E L, Confusion, a heap of Lies, 'tis all Deceit, Destruction and Misery: But in Jesus Christ he hath Righteousness indeed, Life indeed, Power indeed, Heaven indeed. And then he can add, and say with the Apostle, Thanks be unto God, who hath given us Victory through Jesus Christ: O Death, where is thy Sting? O Grave, where is thy Victory? then hath this Corruptible, in him, put on Incorruption; and this Mortal put on Immortality; and then is brought to pass, in him, the saying, as it is written, Death is swallowed up in Victory.*

1 Cor. 15.
54, 55.

Herein the Saints find Jesus Christ to be their Joy, to be their Feast, to be their Mount, to be their Glory, to be their All. In this Mountain they find and receive all the good

good things, and are fully satisfied, and that they
 are to be had no where else; if they look any
 where else, they know there is nothing but Sin,
 Corruption, Death, Hell, Mortality and the
 Grave. And they having found this Mountain,
 they find themselves escaped, delivered from all
 those things: And now they sit down with Abraham, Matt. 8.
 Isaac, and Jacob, in the Kingdom of Heaven: They ^{11.}
 have found Abraham's bosom; they have found
 the Tree of Life in the midst of the Paradise of
 God; they have found the Hidden Manna; they Rev. 3.
 have received the White-Stone, with a New Name,
 which none can know but such as receive it. They
 see themselves delivered; Ay, and are at rest
 from themselves. They see their own Wis-
 dom, their own Power, their own Holiness
 to be, as it is, nothing but Sin, and Hell, and
 Misery, and a Delusion: And this they re-
 joyce in, to see this Pharaoh overwhelmed in
 the Sea; this makes themselves sing the Song
 of Moses and the Lamb, and to see all this to
 be done, not by their own Power, nor by
 their Wisdom, nor by their Watchfulness,
 nor by any Endeavours of theirs; but that the
 whole work, in every part of it, was Christ's
 alone, That 'tis he alone that is mighty to save, ^{Isai. 63.}
 that is also glorious in Apparel, and Travelling ^{1, 2.}
 in the greatness of his Strength; none assisted him,
 no Man stood by him, but he alone made bare
 his own Arm, that so he might have all the
 Glory: These things seen and accomplished
 in themselves, is their Feast of Fat things,
 their Wine on the Lees, their keeping the
 Sabbath, their Day of Praise and Thank-
 giving. They have none to Praise, nor to speak
 well of, but him alone: They find that he
 alone

Mat. 23.
9.

Gal. 1.
12.

alone was their Deliverer, and he was their Captain, and their Conquerer; that he alone was their Leader, their Guide, their Teacher: And that all Teachers were but *Deluders, Soothsayers, Lyars and Deceivers*, but only him: They can call no Man Master and Father upon Earth, for one is their Master and Father, which is Christ alone: As Paul saith, he received not his Gospel of Man, or by Man, but by the Revelation of Jesus Christ: So they receive not their Power, nor their Wisdom, nor their Teaching of, or from Man, but only by, and and from Jesus Christ alone.

Use 2.

Then also, in the next place, let us farther make this Use of this Point, to take notice of the Misery and desperate Condition of all Men by Nature; what a deluge of Destruction is upon them, because of the face of the Covering of all People; because they seek Help, and Strength, and Riches, and Glory, and Wisdom, in other Mountains besides this Mountain; because they find Strength, and Wisdom, and Rest, and Rejoycing, and Feasting in their own Mountains: And the more comfort and delight Men take in their own Wisdom, or Holiness, or the like, so much the more Miserable, so much the farther from the Kingdom of Heaven; when Men look upon themselves, as being Strict, or Holy more than others, because they are under such and such Forms, such Rules, and are so Conformable to the Word and Mind of Christ; and here Solace and Feast themselves, and Cry, *Lo here is Christ, and there is Christ*, in this Form, or that Fellowship, and think therefore they are in a safe Condition; but it will go ill with

Luke 17.
21,

with all others, *Stand farther off, I am Ho-* Isa. 65. 5.
lier then thou: The dangerousness of these
 Mens condition, I say, you may discover from
 the present point, when they make any other
 thing their Rock, or their Mountain, but Christ
 alone; when they think they can Guide them-
 selves, Provide for themselves, Teach them-
 selves, these are in a very miserable Condition,
 these are those of which Christ saith, *Go not* Luke 17.
after them, for they are Deceivers and Delu- 20.
 ders: *for the Kingdom of God cometh not with Ob-*
servation, as they say, by observing this Rule
 and this Form, or that Fellowship, or any way
 that Man hath found out to cover himself with-
 al. All these are but Fig-leaves, which will not
 bear out the Wrath of God, these are but
 Mens Coverings, *which cover themselves with a* Isa. 28. 20.
covering (as they think) from all Evil and
 Wrath, *but 'tis not the Lord's Spirit:* The Bed
is too Broad, and the Covering is Narrow, it will
 not defend them from the Lord's fierce Wrath:
 These are they that have *kindled a Fire to warm* Ibid. 50.
themselves at, but they shall lie down (saith the 11.
 Lord) *in the fire that they have kindled, and in*
the sparks that they have gathered together: And
 for all their Forms, and Prayers, and Duties,
 and Ordinances, and Holinesses, and Washings,
 and Baptizings, and receiving the Sacraments,
 and the like, yet *this is that they shall receive at*
my hand, They shall lie down in Sorrow: For
 when you *did all these things,* did you them at
 all unto me, and not unto your selves? Did you at
 all Fast unto me? Though ye pretended to seek
 me Early, and to seek me Daily, and did delight
 to know my Ways, as a Nation that did Righteous-
 ness, and as if they forsook not (in the least) the
 C
 Ordi-

Isa. 58. 1.

Mat. 21.
31. and
11. 22.

Ordinances of their God, and take delight in Approaching to God: Yet for all this, saith the Lord to the Prophets, *Cry aloud, lift up your Voices like a Trumpet, and shew my People their Transgression, and the House of Israel their Sins:* All these things will not deliver thee from Wrath, but *thou* (rather than any other) shalt lie down in Sorrow and Publicans and Harlots (for all your Holiness and Strictness) shall enter into the Kingdom of Heaven before you: And it shall be easier with Tyre and Sydon in the Day of Judgment, than for these, that have done these and these things in his Name; yet for all this will Christ say, *Depart from me, I know ye not, ye workers of Iniquity:* There was nothing but Iniquity in your Righteousness, in all your Duties, in all your Forms and Professions: You, of all others, *I will not know:* You, of all others, *depart from me:* You, of all others, *are workers of Iniquity:* You, above all, *shall lie down in Sorrow, and in the sparks that you have kindled:* You thought your selves Better than others, Holier than others; when you are indeed and in truth, the Vilest and Worst of all others. Therefore, most Desperate and most Miserable are these above all, in as much as they thought themselves before all: When they think, because of their Holiness, because of their Conformity, because of their Moderation, because of their Abstinence, because of their Meekness, because of their Gravity, therefore they are Better than others; here is the great and unspeakable Delusion of their own Hearts; For Grace and true Religion, never Teacheth any Man to think Highly of himself: But to think Highly of Jesus Christ; Grace Debaseth Man more and more

more; and brings him to see the Bottomless Deceit and Delusion of his own Heart: It Teacheth Men not to think Better and Better of themselves, but Worse and Worse; and makes Men not to desire Praise, or high Esteem from others; but it would have Christ to have all the Glory and Praise, and it self to be Less and Less, and Worse and Worse in its own Esteem; for the more Grace, the more Light; which discovers more and more the infinite and bottomless Vileness and Delusion of their own Natures.

Beloved, this is the true Teaching, which comes only and alone from Jesus Christ: Man's Teaching can never bring this about; but this Teaching and Learning is from the Father, from Heaven: Men learn this Lesson only in the School of Christ; there God is made some- John 6.
 thing, and indeed all in all, and Man is nothing 45.
 but an Infiniteness of Sin and Misery. Let every one therefore examine himself by this Rule, and lay it close to his own Heart: if he Feeds himself, or Glorys, or Feasts himself with any other thing than this, that he is brought to nothing: That God alone may in him, and in the whole Earth be all in all: Let him be sure he hath not *his Teaching* from this *One Father*, Isa. 29. 13.
 and this *One Master*, but his Teaching is *only by the Precepts of Men*. And 'till a Man be come to know this in Experience, whatever he thinks of himself, and whatever acquired Parts or Holiness he hath, and though he be never so much Admired by others, he feeds but on the Wisdom of the Flesh, and lives and depends on that the World Adores for their Gods, either on the External Lusts and Pleasures of the
 . C 2 World,

Prov. 11.
4.

Luke 15.
16.

Jer. 2. 13.

Note
these two
things.
Jam. 3. 15.
1. What
the Vail is
Gen. 3. 6.

World, or else on *Silver and Gold, Riches and Honour, Lands or Preferments, &c.* Which cannot Profit a Man in the Day of Wrath. Or else they feed upon their own Righteousness, their own Duties, on their leaving this Sin, or that Sin, or (as they suppose) all Sin, all gross Sin, and it may be conceive that their Obedience is according to the Rule and Mind of Christ, conforming strictly to the Highest and Perfectest Forms and Fellowships; and resting in this, they feed upon Husks and Vanity, and delude their poor Souls; as the Prodigal, *He would fain have filled his Belly with the Husks, but no Man gave unto him*: None of all these things can satisfy; they will not deliver, nor keep off the Wrath of God; they will prove no Covering, no Shelter at all, but the Wrath of God will break in upon them, and make them appear Wretched and Miserable, Vile, Naked and Abominable. And that Soul that is brought to this, to be stript of all its Garments, and made Naked, and Lost, and Undone (as to it self, and all things of Man;) this is the Happy Soul, the Blessed Soul. The other, all others put their trust in the *Arm of Flesh*, and are departed from the *Fountain of Life*, from the *Living God*, and therefore are not, nor cannot be blessed, but are those that are Cursed.

Therefore we would that ye should take special notice of these two things: First, what this Cursed disposition in Man is, what the Vail is wherewith he so deludes and deceives himself: And Secondly, how this Vail is removed: First, what it is; It is that *Earthly, Sensual, and Devilish Wisdom* in the Hearts of the Sons of Men, perswading them to be that which they are

are not: That they are *Holy*, and *Just*, and *Good*: That they have *Goodness*, and *Holiness*, and *Wisdom*, and *Power*, &c. And if they improve these (say they, as they may) they may bring themselves into a happy and a safe Condition, and conclude that they can forsake Sin, and they can be Righteous and Holy: This is that Devilish Wisdom that the Devil infused into *Adam* in his Fall: This was and is *his Eating the forbidden Fruit*: When God had Created him dependant upon himself for all his Power, Wisdom, Goodness, Holiness, he fell from this condition, to have a dependance upon himself and on the Creaturely Being, on his own Wisdom and Holiness, &c. To have a Power in himself: And thus he departed from the Fountain of all Good, to seek a Happiness in himself, in his own Nothingness; and thus he became Lost, Cursed and Miserable: This is **THE VAIL**, The Covering, the Deceit that is upon all Flesh, *The Vail of the Covering of all Nations*. And it is called a Covering, because it hides and keeps away the Light, that so Man cannot see himself as he is, Cursed, and Hellish, and infinitely Miserable. Now this Vail will not suffer the Light to come upon him, to see himself as he is; because Man by all means and ways labours to maintain a good Opinion of himself, and for others to have the same, and would by no means see himself Lost and Undone; this Vail hides that Darkness and gulf of Sin that is in him, and tells him that it is not so nor so with him; but he is Holy and Righteous, and hath Wisdom and Power, and the like: This is the Vail that is upon the Heart, which must be Rent, if ever Man come to be

Happy ; if ever he hopes to feast *in this Mountain of fat things*. You know we use *Vails*, that the defects and deformity of things may not appear : And so Man doth by his own Heart ; he would by no means see the Uglineſs, the Monſterous deformity thereof, he would by no means once think that Hell and the bottomleſs Pit is in him ; he would by no means ſee the ſmoak of that bottomleſs Pit ariſe out of his own heart : But 'tis certain, though Men hide this from their ſight and Beholding ; yet all Men have covered themſelves with this *Vail*,
 1 Cor. 15. 22. and 'tis the *covering of all Nations* ; In Adam all die : Not a Man upon the face of the Earth, but all *have eaten of this forbidden tree* : and becauſe we have eaten, all the endeavour of Man now is to keep away the ſight of Guilt ; he would not ſee his Deformity, his loſt Condition ; but
 Gen. 3. 8. with *Adam, he runs among the Buſhes* and hides himſelf *among the Trees from the preſence of the Lord* ; he labours to keep away the Light, that he may not ſee his own Blackneſs and Deformity. What ſays he, Have I no Wiſdom, no Power, no Holineſs, no Love, no Faith, no power to Repent, no ability to any good thing ? This he cannot endure to hear of, this he runs away from, as from Death and the Devil ; this cuts him to the very Heart. Therefore all his endeavour is, to keep this Vail whole, that it may ſtill remain : Thus he remains *under the Old Teſtament*, and the Vail is Unrent, and is
 1 Cor. 3. 14. *ſtill upon the Heart*. But in the Day that *the Soul turns to the Lord*, it is content to ſee and acknowledge its own Miſery, its own Darkneſs ; then
 Hoſ. 13. 8. is the *Caul of his Heart Rent*, then is Hell laid open in him, and the bottomleſs Gulf ſeen in him.

himself: And that Hell Men so much talk of, he sees to be really in himself, and that himself is the very Image of the Devil.

Secondly, Take notice how this Vail comes to be removed and taken away.

Now this Vail is only rent and done away by Jesus Christ: Not all the Power, nor all the Art of the Sons of Men, is ever able to remove this Covering; there is none to be found in Heaven or Earth *to open the seven Seals* but only he, Jesus Christ alone *hath the Key of the bottomless Pit*: None can Unlock this Hellish Heart of Man but himself; his Heart is the *bottomless Pit*, and the Devil is the *Keeper*: And till Christ himself come and Unlock and open this Gulf, and remove the Devil, 'tis not all the endeavours of the Sons of Men *can bind this Strong Man*, nor open the foul and dark Heart of Man; but all their study, and all their endeavours are to strengthen this Vail, to make it thicker, that they may not see the *Horrible Pit*: Man runs to this thing and t'other thing, and all is to keep from his sight the *knowledge of himself*; either I say to the Cares of the World, or the Pleasures, or the Riches and Contents thereof, that if it once begin to be opened, and he sees the smoak thereof begin to ascend, he strives by all means to cover it close again; he Choaks these Thoughts, *that the Worm that never dieth* may not gnaw within him, and to quench the Fire which can never be quenched but only the *Blood of the Son of God*; or else I say, when Men are still dogg'd with the thoughts of Hell, and these things will not be a sufficient Covering, they seek out farther, and get a Covering of their own devising; they get to this Duty, and to

Secondly,
How the
Vail is
Rent.
Rev. 5. 5.
and 9. 1.

Mat. 12.
29.

Mark 9.

44.

•that

that Form, and change from better to better, (as they think) and from one degree of Holiness (as they conceive) to another, and thereby get an opinion that they are Children of God, and Heirs of Heaven, and therefore they are safe, and all is well with them; and they think they do all this in conformity to the Mind and Will of God, when it is meerly to hide and cover themselves from their own beholding, and that they may behold themselves Holy, and Wise, and Gracious, and Happy: Now I say, the work of Christ is to discover all this to be a Delusion and a Lie, and to let him see that he is a Cursed, Hellish, Damned, Undone Miserable Creature, and no good in him at all: And to let him see that Christ Jesus alone is *the only* Ordinance appointed of the Father to bring many Sons unto Glory, and that there is nothing an Ordinance but Christ alone; and in vain do Men talk and keep such a stir about Ordinances, except Christ be the Power of every Ordinance: He is ordained of the Father to be Judge of Quick and Dead; he is also ordained to give Repentance and Forgiveness of Sins: What can an Ordinance do if he be not the Ordinance, if he be not the Power and Virtue of all Ordinances? 'Tis he alone is ordained to be the only Teacher, and Master, and Father; and therefore call no Man Father nor Master, nor no External Ordinance Guide, but only as he is in it: And therefore that is in it self Empty and Dead; and whatever Acts not in this one Ordinance Jesus Christ the Son of the Father, without whom ye can do nothing at all; whatever it be, it is no other but a Deceit, a Covering and a Lie. 24 MA 59